

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 3531

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: UMNO ELECTION RESULTS

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1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER WAS REAL VICTOR IN UNITED MALAYS NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (UMNO) LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS JUNE 21-22. ELECTED AS VICE-PRESIDENTS WERE RAZAK'S "FIRST TEAM" OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER ABDUL GHAFAR BABA, PETRONAS CHAIRMAN TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAH AND EDUCATION MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMED. COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED WAS DEFEAT OF SELANGOR CHIEF MINISTER DATUK HARUN IDRIS; CLUE AS TO HIS FAILURE (AND OUR ERRONEOUS FORECAST CONTAINED REFTELS) WAS FOUND IN ANTI-CORRUPTION SPEECH JUNE 20 BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK HUSSEIN ONN. STRONG WINNERS IN SUPREME COUNCIL ELECTIONS WERE INFORMATION AND SPECIAL FUNCTIONS (FOREIGN AFFAIRS) MINISTER TENGKU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN AND PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTER DATUK MUSA HITAM. END SUMMARY.

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2. WINNERS IN UMNO VICE-PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS JUNE 21 WERE AS FOLLOWS: GHAFAR BABA (838 OUT OF 1,078 VOTES), TENGKU RAZALEIGH (642) AND MAHATHIR (474). ALSO-RANS INCLUDED HARUN IDRIS (427), JOHORE UMNO LEADER TAN SRI SYED JAAFAR ALBAR (374), TRADE AND INDUSTRIES MINISTER DATUK HAMZAH BIN ABU SAMAH (209), PERAK CHIEF MINISTER TAN SRI GHAZALI JAWI (164) AND, IN LAST PLACE, HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER TAN SRI GHAZALI SHAFIE (106). CLUE TO HARUN'S DEFEAT, WHICH SURPRISED US AND MOST OTHER POLITICAL OBSERVERS, WAS STRONG ANTI-CORRUPTION SPEECH BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER HUSSEIN ONN (WHO IS ALSO UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENT) TO PARTY'S YOUTH AND WOMEN'S AFFILIATES JUNE 20. HUSSEIN SAID THAT GOVERNMENT WILL EXPOSE CORRUPTORS "BE THEY MOUSEDEER OR DRAGON," AN APPARENT SIGNAL TO PARTY MEMBERS THAT HARUN, WHO HAS BEEN TAINTED BY SEVERAL SCANDALS OVER PAST FEW YEARS, WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO TOP LEADERSHIP. ALSO, SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE UMNO ELECTIONS PM RAZAK ADVISED PARTY RANK-AND-FILE NOT TO VOTE FOR CANDIDATES ON BASIS OF THEIR PUBLIC RECORDS ALONE, BUT TO LOOK INTO THEIR BACKGROUNDS FOR REAL VIEWS AND MOTIVATIONS. UMNO-WATCHERS BELIEVE THAT RAZAK DID NOT DIRECTLY INTERVENE AGAINST HARUN BUT THAT WORD WAS PASSED TO STATE LEADERS THAT ANTI-CORRUPTION CAMPAIGN WAS ABOUT TO BE LAUNCHED WITHIN PARTY. IT IS ALSO NOTEWORTHY THAT HARUN'S CLOSE POLITICAL ALLY, YOUTH LEADER DATUK HAJI SUHAIMI, WAS DEFEATED IN BID FOR ELECTION TO SUPREME COUNCIL, ANOTHER INDICATION THAT HARUN'S POLITICAL AMBITIONS HAVE SUFFERED SEVERE BLOW.

3. FOLLOWING 20 PARTY LEADERS WERE ELECTED TO SUPREME COUNCIL JUNE 22: RITHAUDDEEN (909 VOTES); MUSA HITAM (908); HAMZAH ABU SAMAH (822); DEPUTY MIN IN PM'S DEPARTMENT DATO SRI HAJI KAMARUDDIN ISA (781); DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MIN DATUK WAN ABDUL KADIR ISMAIL (754); JOHORE CHIEF MINISTER TAN SRI OTHMAN SAAT (701); DEPUTY AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT MIN DATUK MUSTAPHA JABAR (701); DEPUTY SPEAKER OF LOWER HOUSE TAN SRI SYED NASIR ISMAIL (670); GHAZALI JAWI (657); PERLIS CHIEF MINISTER DATUK JAAFAR HASSAN (643); NEGRI SEMBILAN CHIEF MINISTER DATUK MANSOR OTHMAN (634); DEPUTY HOME AFFAIRS

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MIN DATUK ABDUL SAMAD IDRIS (610); GHAZALI SHAFIE (588); ENERGY, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY MIN HAJI MOHAMED YA'ACOB (562); KEDAH UMNO LEADER DATUK SYED NAHAR SHAHABUDDIN (555); UMNO WOMEN'S LEADER SENATOR RAFIDAH AZIZ (547); TRENGGANU CHIEF MINISTER WAN MOKHTAR AHMAD (534); UMNO YOUTH DEPUTY LEADER AND DEPUTY MIN FOR COORDINATION OF PUBLIC CORPORATIONS DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT (532); CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS MIN DATUK ALI HAJI AHMAD (520); AND MALACCA CHIEF MINISTER

Haji Abdul Ghani Ali (508). Number of incumbent ministers and state chief ministers elected is surprising and should generally be taken as affirmation of Razak administration and indication of strong central control of party that Razak has established. Also, several individuals with strong Islamic images (especially Kamaruddin, Wan Abdul Kadir, Mustapha Jabar and Syed Nasir) ranked high in balloting, perhaps indicating resurgence of conservative religious group within party. At same time, very strong showings by Rithauddeen and Musa Hitam mark them as front-runners for vice-presidencies at next party elections in 1978.

4. In all, party elections were clear victory for PM Razak as none of the loyalists of his administration were defeated. Harun, seen as foremost challenger to Razak, will despite his defeat continue as ex-officio vice president for another year; he has announced he will not seek re-election to UMNO youth leader position in 1976, leaving field open for Musa Hitam or Mohamed Rahmat to succeed him. Finally, vice presidential and supreme council elections have produced regionally and ideologically balanced team of officials who are basically loyal to the prime minister, a team that will be further strengthened by appointments by Razak in next few weeks of ten or so additional members of supreme council.

5. Substantive aspects of UMNO congress will be reported Septel.
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